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# San Diego City Attorney Jan I. Goldsmith

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Rental Scam Nets Jail Term for San Diego Woman** *City Attorney's Office seeks victims of rental scam*

**San Diego, CA:** Advertising a room for rent that did not exist, Jasmine Ford defrauded ten victims of room deposits totaling \$3,545. Ford, 22, pleaded guilty in San Diego Superior Court yesterday to six counts of petty theft. She was sentenced to six months in jail and ordered to pay full restitution to the victims of her crimes.

Ford advertised a room for rent on Craigslist.com and PennySaverUsa.com. Using various fake names, including Letoya Jackson, Ford met with a prospective tenant and required a cash payment of \$300 to \$355 for the first month's rent. She would then provide a written receipt and a key to the supposed apartment. The keys turned out to be bogus and the apartment non-existent. Efforts by the victims to contact Ford after they paid her were unsuccessful.

The case was investigated by the San Diego Police Department, with the offenses occurring between February 2011 and August 2011. The Consumer Protection Unit of the San Diego City Attorney's Office filed criminal charges against Ford in June 2011. Ford was arrested in August 2011 after a warrant was issued for her arrest.

As part of her sentence, Ford was placed on probation for three years and ordered not to advertise a room for rent or make any other rental offer. If she violates the terms of her probation, she will serve at minimum another six months in jail. Ford was previously convicted of petty theft in August 2010.

The City Attorney's Office believes there may be other victims of Ford's rental scam. Anyone who may be a victim or who has information about a potential victim should contact the City Attorney's Consumer Help Line at (619) 533-5600. The City Attorney's Consumer & Environmental Protection Unit prosecutes violations of law that arise from consumer transactions or actions that damage the environment. CEPU also investigates complaints of false or misleading advertising.

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